

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 NRC-05 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 EPG-02 DODE-00 EB-07 FEAЕ-00
FPC-01 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06 OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04
TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /114 W
-----121745Z 065854 /47

P R 121646Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8217
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION OECD PARIS
USMISSION IAEA VIENNA
ERDA WASHDC
ERDA GERMANTOWN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08248

DEPT. PASS NRC FOR KELBER

E.O.: 11652 N/A
TAGS: ENRG, TECH, GW
SUBJECT: GERMAN FREEZE ON FAST BREEDER BUDGET

REF: A. BONN 7630; B. BONN 7341; C. BONN A-152;
D. BONN 07588

1. SUMMARY. THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO
FREEZE FUNDS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF FAST
BREEDER REACTORS, UNTIL A THOROUGH EVALUATION
PROGRAM OF THIS ADVANCED REACTOR LINE HAS
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BEEN CONDUCTED. A FIRST ANALYSIS OF THIS
ANNOUNCEMENT SHOWS THAT ALL EXISTING FAST
BREEDER PROJECTS WILL BE CONTINUED AT PREVIOUS
LEVELS, BUT NEW PROJECTS ARE VERY UNCERTAIN.
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY RECEIVED DETAILS OF THE DECISION FROM

DR. DAEUNERT, HEAD OF THE DIVISION FOR ADVANCED REACTOR SYSTEMS AT THE FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (BMFT). DAEUNERT EXPLAINED THAT THE FREEZE WOULD ONLY AFFECT PART OF THE FEDERAL LMFBR PROGRAM WHICH CONSISTS OF THREE SUBPROGRAMS: KNK II, A SMALL SCALE TEST REACTOR TO CONDUCT PLUTONIUM RESEARCH, THE SNR-300, GERMANY'S 300-EMW FAST BREEDER REACTOR, AND THE ADVANCED SBR, A RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE FAST BREEDER REACTOR LINE. THE FIRST TWO OF THESE PROJECTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AS PLANNED -- FOR THE PERIOD 1977-80 KNK II WILL RECEIVE DM 169 MILLION AND SNR-300 WILL RECEIVE ABOUT 900 MILLION. THE SBR PROJECT FUNDING WILL BE PARTIALLY FROZEN. A DM 400 MILLION BUDGET OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS HAD BEEN PROPOSED FOR THE SBR, WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTING DM 227 MILLION. TO DATE DM 105 MILLION OF THE DM 227 MILLION HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR LONG TERM COMMITMENTS WHICH WILL BE HONORED. THE REMAINING DM 122 MILLION WILL BE FROZEN BY THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION. THESE FUNDS WERE NOT INTENDED FOR USE BEFORE 1978 IN ANY CASE, SO NO IMMEDIATE IMPACTS IN THE FRG'S FAST BREEDER PROGRAM ARE EXPECTED.

3. A BMFT SPOKESMAN CALLED THE DECISION
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"A NORMAL PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE" WHICH HAD BEEN APPLIED BEFORE TO THE BUDGET FOR GERMANY'S HIGH TEMPERATURE REACTOR PROJECT, THTR-300. HE SAID THIS QUALIFIED FREEZE WAS

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AN ADEQUATE MEASURE TO ASSURE A SOPHISTICATED
DISCUSSION OF THIS COMPLICATED MATTER, SINCE
THE ROUTINE PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET SESSION
COULD NOT DEVOTE THE NECESSARY TIME FOR A
DISCUSSION ABOUT THE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE FAST BREEDER REACTOR. THE
SPOKESMAN EXPLICITLY STATED THAT THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT STILL FAVORS THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE FAST BREEDER CONCEPT IN ORDER TO KEEP
OPEN THE OPTION FOR THIS REACTOR TYPE WHICH
COULD ASSURE A SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SUPPLY
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OF ENERGY FOR THE FRG.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: THIS BMFT DECISION
QUITE OBVIOUSLY IS A COMPROMISE WITH A
FACTION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SPD WHICH
HAD DEMANDED A TOTAL RENUNCIATION OF THE
FAST BREEDER PROGRAM. (REF A.) WITH THE
INTENSE AND VERY CONTROVERSIAL DISCUSSION IN
THE SPD PARTY ABOUT NUCLEAR ENERGY IN GENERAL,
AND THE NECESSITY OF A PLUTONIUM ECONOMY IN
PARTICULAR, IT SEEMS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT
THE FRG GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT

ITS FAST BREEDER PROGRAM. (REF B-D). THIS UNCERTAINTY WAS INCREASED BY A SPOKESMAN OF THE OPPOSITION CDU/CSU PARTY (UNTIL NOW A DETERMINED SUPPORTER OF NUCLEAR ENERGY), WHO HAD REVEALED THAT THE SCEPTICISM ABOUT THE NECESSITY AND FEASIBILITY OF THE FAST BREEDER REACTOR WAS SHARED BY MEMBERS OF ALL PARTIES, AS COULD BE SEEN FROM THE DISCUSSION TAKING PLACE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY.

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